DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 177 479 CS 005 003

AUTHOR	O'Brien, Bernadette C.
TITLE	Tapestry: Interrelationships of the Arts in Reading and Language Development.
INSTITUTION	New York City Board of Education, N.Y.
PUB DATE	[78]
NOTE	15p.; For related documents, see ED 144 029 and ED 170 738
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Art; Art Activities; *Art Education; *Compensatory Education Programs; Content Reading; Elementary Education; *Integrated Curriculum; *Interdisciplinary Approach; *Language Experience Approach; Reading Instruction; *Reading Programs; Validated Programs
IDENTIFIERS	Elementary Secondary Education Act Title I; *Learning to Read Through the Arts (Program); National Diffusion Network Programs

ABSTRACT

Learning to Read Through the Arts is an intensive, individualized reading program that focuses on the improvement of reading skills through the integration of a total art program with a total reading program. The staff includes reading teachers, art teachers, and classroom teachers working as a team. Listening, speaking, writing, and reading techniques are stressed in the reading-oriented arts workshops; a diagnostic, prescriptive approach to reading is stressed in the arts-oriented reading workshop; and a language experience approach to reading is used by teachers in both areas. Subjects taught in the arts workshops are dance, music, theater, filmmaking, photography, mixed media, drawing, puppetry, printmaking, world crafts, and painting. Children go on regular field trips to cultural institutions and educational resource sites; special events and performances are also brought to the program. This program was chosen as one of the 12 exemplary reading programs in the United States by the national Right to Read effort. It was also validated by the Joint Dissemination Review Panel of the United States Office of Education (USOE) and is a Developer/Demonstrator project of the USOE National Diffusion Network. Replication programs exist in several states. (MKM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED177479

TAPESTRY: INTERRELATIONSHIPS OF THE ARTS IN READING AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

"Learning to Read Through the Arts"

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Bernadette C. O'Brien

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Bernadette C. O'Brien

Citywide Coordinator

Title I Children's Program:

Learning to Read Through the Arts

The Board of Education of the City of New York

Collegium Book Publishers, Inc.

CS005003

Learning to Read Through the Arts

Bernadette C. O'Brien

Our educational system has traditionally approached the arts as subordinate to more substantial subjects such as reading, writing, and mathematics. The "Learning to Read Through the Arts" program, on the other hand, approaches the arts as a core for learning. The program addresses itself to children who are of an age when their ideas about art are not yet formulated and they are most receptive to creative inspiration. When given encouragement and opportunity, most children will express themselves creatively. The success and sense of achievement gained from completing a work of art can give the child confidence which can then be transferred and applied to other areas of learning.

The dominant theme of the program is the teaching of skills in reading through involvement in the arts--performing, plastic and film. The underlying theme is to build self-confidence, improve self-image, and add to the experiences of the participating child.

The nationally validated exemplary, Developer/Demonstrator, multi-district Title I Children's Program: Learning to Read Through the Arts, The Board of Education of the City of New York is an experiential program. It is an intensive, individualized, reading program that focuses on the improvement of reading skills

through the integration of a total art program with a total reading program.

The child sees, hears, touches, smells, and/or tastes his products! Each of these learning experiences has been designed to help him to perceive, recall, and reinforce what he is learning. The process is as important as the product.

Listening, speaking, writing and reading techniques are stressed in the reading-oriented arts workshops. A diagnostic, prescriptive approach to reading is stressed in the reading workshops. The staff includes reading teachers, artist teachers and classroom teachers working as a team.

Some of the skills learned in the art experience will be valuable to him in his reading, and vice versa. In order to succeed in this, however, a clear linkage must be made so that the learner will begin to correlate the many skills learned in the different disciplines. The Learning to Read Through the Arts methodology attempts to make this crucial linkage for each learner. For example: The teacher presents a work of art--a painting, in this case--to the child. Together, they notice the details of the painting and use the spoken and written word to describe them. As the child works on his own painting, using various colors and shapes and designs, it becomes possible for him/her to use the words which describe his/her own work. He is helped to use this vocabulary in his reading and writing, too. As he becomes aware of the details which are developing his

own painting, he now finds that the details may also be described through language. He moves from the concrete (nonverbal) to the abstract (verbal) experience. It is a simple matter to convert this knowledge into written form, by presenting to the child, reading exercises in "grasping detail," for instance, which will now have become personally meaningful to him.

We have found that if children are able to read material and apply the information thus acquired to some practical purpose, the children are interested in what they are reading and they recall what they have read. Reading becomes a tool to learn more about the arts.

The artist teachers are trained in the Learning to Read Through the Arts methodology. They build on the language the child already knows by using a Learning to Read Through the Arts language experience approach in their reading oriented arts workshops. In a language experience approach the following procedures work well: The art teachers and pupils decide on an art project. The students verbalize about the experience with the teachers. As the students express themselves, the teacher elicits a few sentences that sum up what has been said. A short composition is written by the teacher in the master journal while the pupils watch. The instructor calls attention to details that are important to reading, such as letter formation, association of sounds with symbols, repetition of the same sounds

or symbols, the function of capitalization and punctuation, phrasing and vocabulary development. The group composition serves as the basis for discussion in which letters and words are recognized.

Each student maintains a personal, individual journal. In it he copies the writings of the master journal as well as his statement of purpose for each art project, relevant technical information and writings that are inspired from the art books in the reading corner.

Re-reading of the entries in the teacher's master journal and in the student's log is scheduled. The purpose is to recall vocabulary and to reinforce comprehension.

Within the context of creative activity, reading proficiency is developed through the Learning to Read Through the Arts language experience approach in the need for following directions, drawing inferences, thinking sequentially, and using specialized vocabulary. Class journals, logs, and diaries are kept in which information and directions acquired in the workshop and reactions to field trips are recorded on a regular basis. Children are involved creatively in applying reading skills through such activities as writing movie scripts and poetry, reading dramatic skits and writing autobiographies to accompany self-portraits. A great variety of literature about the arts, used also in the reading workshops, is read in depth in the arts workshops.

The art teacher, in collaboration with the reading teacher, determines, in advance, the vocabulary required for discussion and completion of each art project. These words are lettered and posted around the art room and referred to frequently. The artist teacher may ask students to write the words in context, in the form of a definition, a story or an information account. Throughout the life of the art project these words are repeated . . . verbally and visually. The vocabulary may be specialized or normed to grade level. The instructor corrects the student journals and written materials for language and content.

Brief descriptions of the reading oriented arts workshops follow:

Dance--Classical, modern, and ethnic dance are taught by the dance teacher. The historical background of basic dance forms is explored.

Music--Instruction is given in instrumental and choral music. Music history and appreciation and music notation are also taught, and children learn about individual composers and musicians.

Theater--Instruction in creative dialogue, poetry, script writing, improvisation, and pantomime form the basis of the theater workshops.

Filmmaking--Activity centers around the making of live films and involves directing, acting, set construction, costume design, script writing, sound tracking, lighting, and editing. Story boards are used on which dialogue, action and technical information needed to shoot the films are recorded.

Also, techniques of animation are explored, ranging from simple McLarenesque application directly on clear film to the more involved process of actual production including drawing, painting, modeling, set construction, script writing, sound track, camera work, and editing.

Photography--In learning photography, each child will explore the community through the eyes of a 35 mm camera. The fields of both audiovisual presentation and still photography are studied, along with the process of developing film, cropping and mounting.

Mixed Media--This workshop involves the children in making assemblages, three-dimensional works, and environmental works. Preparation and cleaning procedures will be emphasized.

Drawing--The art of drawing is introduced through a variety of media and techniques. Frequent drawing outings are scheduled in order to develop observational powers. Drawing is further explored historically as a means of telling a story, capturing an event or feeling, realizing an idea as a political tool or as an escape.

Puppetry Theater--Activity centers around the construction of shadow and papier mache made puppets and their use in both improvisations and more ambitious productions involving scripts, sound effects, stage design, stage constructions, costume design, and narration.

Printmaking--The historical background of printmaking is

studied through various techniques such as silkscreening and linoleum and woodblock printing.

World Crafts--Sculpture, potting, weaving, leather craft, and jewelry making are offered as well as various sculptural techniques involving materials such as styrofoam, lucite, plastic, papier mache, wood, clay, and plaster.

Painting--The theme of what it is to be an artist in the 20th century is pursued in this workshop which makes extensive use of museum collections. Creative painting is studied as well as techniques involving the stretching and priming of canvas and the mixing of colors.

Multi-Activity--This workshop offers a short-term art or reading experience apart from either one of the workshops in which the child is registered. The children who participate have either short attention span, a need to feel success quickly, or a need to take part in an activity other than the one he is pursuing in his workshop.

The reading teachers use an individualized, prescriptive, remediation or enrichment approach. The students' reading weaknesses are diagnosed through the Wisconsin Design Skill Development Tests, the California Reading Achievement Test and informal testing.

Most of the prescriptive materials are teacher-made, because the content of the reading relates to the ongoing art

projects, rather than a standard, prepared reading text. Books stencils, story boards, charts, filmstrips, tapes, and recordings are some of the materials used in the multimedia center. The design also includes student participation in research, as children are encouraged to seek information about their art projects. These factors allow the youngsters to develop and build their interest and appreciation in the arts and in reading. The specialized vocabulary and grade level vocabulary are exchanged by the arts and reading specialists, in order that each specialist will reinforce the learning in both the arts and reading workshops.

In addition to the arts and reading workshops, children go on regular field trips to cultural institutions and educational resource sites. Special events and/or performances are also brought to the program periodically. In this way the students have an opportunity to research a primary source such as an original painting, sculpture or manuscript, or they may see a professional theater performance, dance performance or hear a concert.

It has always been a commitment of the program to associate itself with major cultural institutions in the community where the program takes place, such as The Bronx Museum of the Arts, The New York Aquarium, The Queens Museum, The Staten Island Children's Museum and The Brooklyn Museum.

The students are also given the opportunity to showcase their own original works and accomplishments in the annual "Learning to Read Through the Arts Exhibition" and "The Performing Arts and Film Festival." For the past two years the children's exhibition and performance was held at the Lowenstein Plaza of Fordham University at Lincoln Center.

Parents' workshops are an important part of the program in order that the parents may understand the program, learn how children learn, and have an opportunity to discuss family living. Also, the parents may serve as workshop or field trip assistants or become members of the program's Advisory Board. We found this aspect of the program most valuable to everyone involved in the project.

Pre-service and in-service training are necessary for both art and reading specialists and staff. An on-going evaluation of the project is a major feature.

According to the evaluator, Paul Heintz of New York University, the Title I Children's Program: Learning to Read Through the Arts "provides a unique opportunity for organizing instruction that is based on current learning theory and research in education and psychology. Cognitive theorists posit that students learn most readily if exposed to knowledge, concepts or skill in sequence that proceed from concrete to abstract. It is highly likely, therefore, that the success of the current

program in enabling students who were previously unsuccessful in reading to make significant gains in reading is, in large part, due to the goodness of fit that has been achieved between the program activities and the way children are naturally set to learn."

Since 1971, the evaluations of past programs have shown that the students improve an average of 1 to 2 months in reading for each month they have participated in the program as measured by standardized reading tests.

The Title I Children's Program: Learning to Read Through the Arts, The Board of Education of the City of New York received national recognition when the American Institute of Research for the National Right to Read Effort chose it as one of twelve exemplary reading programs in the United States. It was validated by the Joint Dissemination Review Panel of the United States Office of Education. The program was also selected by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare as one of thirty-three exemplary Title I Programs in the nation. This Title I **Learning** to Read Through the Arts Children's Program is a Developer/Demonstrator project of the United States Office of Education, National Diffusion Network.

Commencing 1978-1979 the program, with the approval of the Board of Education, utilizing ESEA Title I funding (Impact Aid), has expanded to five sites in the boroughs of Manhattan, Staten Island, Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx in New York City.

There are replication programs of the Title I Children's Program: Learning to Read Through the Arts in both rural and urban areas in the states of Arkansas, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York and Wyoming. Kansas and Minnesota are the newest states to replicate the program.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aston-Warner, Sylvia. Teacher, A Touchstone Book, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963.

Chall, Jeanne. Learning to Read, the Great Debate, McGraw Hill, 1967.

Chenfeld, Mimi B. Teaching Language Arts Creatively, New York: Harcourt, Brace, Javanovich, 1978.

Churchill, Angiola. Art for Preadolescents, New York: McGraw Hill, 1971.

D'Amico, Victor. Creative Teaching in Art, Revised Ed., Penn.: International Textbook Company, 1968.

Froman, Robert. Science, Art and Visual Illusions, New York: Simon Schuster, 1970.

Harris, Albert J. How to Increase Reading Ability, New York: David McKay Co., 1961.

Housing, Kenneth M. Art, Artists and Art Education, McGraw Hill, 1964.

Kellogg, Rhoda. Analyzing Children's Art, Palo Alto, California: National Press Books, 1969.

Leferne, Carl A. Linguistics of the Teaching of Reading, McGraw Hill, 1964.

Linderman, Earl W. and Donald W. Herberhalz. Developing Artistic and Perceptual Awareness, Iowa: W.C. Brown and Co., 2nd Edition, 1969.

Lowenfeld, Viktor and W. Lambert Brittain. Creative and Mental Growth, 4th Edition, New York: Macmillan, 1964.

Marshall, Sybil. An Experiment in Education, Cambridge of the University Press, 1970.

Mattel, Edward L. Meaning in Crafts, 3rd Edition, Prentice Hall, 1971.

Smith, Benton Nila. Reading Instruction for Today's Children, Engelwood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1963.

Veach, Jeanette, et. al. Key Words to Reading, The Language Experience Approach Begins, Columbus, Ohio: Bell and Howell Company, 1973.

Collegium Book Publishers, Inc.